

Notes on Some Malaysian Snakes

By N. SMEDLEY, M. A.

Typhlops braminus (Daud.).

An example taken on Singapore Island on the 18th July, 1930, is provisionally referred to this species. It differs from the description and other specimens in the collection of the Raffles Museum in having the nasals incompletely divided, the cleft just failing to reach the rostral; the anterior nasal is in contact with the first and second labials inferiorly (the nasal cleft arises from the 2nd labial). The whole head, not merely the snout, is white in spirit, as are the anus and the tip of the tail. The colours in life were:—"Head pink; body purplish brown". Several species of *Typhlops* are recorded as having the head, anal region and tail whitish; it is probable that all such records were made from preserved specimens and that they were pink in life. Total length, 235 mm. The greatest length previously recorded for *T. braminus* is 175 mm.

Typhlops diardi nigroalbus D. & B.

A specimen of this snake, from Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, kept in captivity in the Raffles Museum, exhibits characteristics not unlike those of *Cylindrophis rufus*. Like that species, it can depress the body, and when touched will often raise the tail rather than the head; it will frequently emerge from its burrow tail first.

The head is pinkish-white. The posterior part of the body is marked with very fine oblique streaks giving the appearance of cracks in the skin. (Observed on a freshly-moulted specimen). This specimen later escaped and was dead when found. It exhibited curious post-mortem changes in coloration. The upper surface was no longer the usual iridescent blue-grey, but a dirty black. The oblique markings were visible throughout the length as greyish stripes continuous round the body. On the white ventral surface they had the appearance of pencil-markings. A similar pigmentation emphasised the sutures between the scales of the head. Total length, 420 mm. Previously recorded up to 360 mm.

Cylindrophis rufus (Laur.).

I recently had the opportunity of examining a young specimen, in the collection of Mr. A. St. Alban Smith, since despatched to the Zoological Gardens in London. The crossbands on the dorsal surface were bright vermilion in colour.

Dryocalamus subannulatus (D. & B.).

The Raffles Museum collection includes a specimen, collected on Siberut, Mentawi Islands, in 1924, which Dr. Smith appears inadvertently to have omitted from his list.¹ He had labelled it "*Dryocalamus annularis*". It agrees in every way with the description and other specimens except in size; it has a total length of 320 mm., tail 127 mm. Boulenger (Fauna Malay Pen., Rept. and Batr., p. 135) gives these measurements as 295 mm. and 170² mm. respectively. The snake was previously known from the Malay Peninsula, Singapore and Sumatra.

Gongylosoma longicauda (Peters).

A specimen in the Raffles Museum from Lawas, Borneo, collected by Mr. A. Everett, exceeds the maximum length previously recorded for the species. It has a total length of 480 mm., tail 190 mm. It shows the five light lines anteriorly, agreeing with the description given by de Rooij,³ and not three only as in that of Boulenger.⁴

The anterior sub-linguals are shorter than the posterior.

Macrocalamus lateralis Gthr.

Mr. M. R. Henderson of the Botanic Gardens, Singapore, recently obtained a specimen of this snake on Cameron's Highlands, Federated Malay States. It had a total length of 380 mm., as against a previously recorded maximum of 300 mm.

Pseudorabdion longiceps (Cantor).

Examination of twenty specimens in the collection of the Raffles Museum, with scale counts of all but two badly damaged specimens, one from Singapore and one from Pulau Aor, shows that the sexual variation noted by Swarder (Singapore Nat., I, Pt. 2, 1922, p. 65) holds good for snakes from the Malay Peninsula, Singapore, the Rhio Archipelago and Sumatra. The range of variation is greater than hitherto recorded; my counts of Singapore specimens do not agree exactly with Swarder's figures.

	<i>Ventrals</i>	<i>Sub-caudals</i>
Males	... 130—141	25—31
Females	... 143—151	18—23

The yellow collar and the yellowish spot above the angle of the mouth vary with the individual without reference to sex.

¹ Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., 49, XVIII, 1926, p. 76.

² Evidently a misprint for "70".

³ Rept. Indo-Australian Arch. II, 140.

⁴ Cat. Snakes, II, p. 284 and Fauna Mal. Pen., p. 152.

Pseudoxenodon macrops (Blyth).

Mr. Henderson also obtained from Cameron's Highlands a snake which appeared to me to belong to the genus *Natrix*, but was unlike any species known to me. Dr. Malcolm Smith determined it as *Pseudoxenodon macrops*. A specimen taken in Perak many years ago was referred to this species by Dr. Boulenger, but on later examination Dr. Smith decided that it was not that species, but *Natrix chrysarga*. Mr. Henderson's specimen is therefore the first of this species to be recorded from the Peninsula.

Natrix petersi (Blgr.)^a

Previously known from Sumatra and Borneo only, this species has recently been obtained in the Malay Peninsula by Mr. S. J. Ludgater at Tampin, Negri Sembilan. Mr. Ludgater's specimen is considerably larger than any yet recorded, the length of the head and body being 380 mm.; the tail, which is incomplete, measures 55 mm. Ventrals 140, subcaudals 26; it is a male. The specimen agrees well with de Rooij's description and with the type-specimen from Borneo in the British Museum collection. The only difference is a slight one of coloration, where, due no doubt to age, the black edging to the ventral scales has disappeared except at the outer margins.

The position of *Natrix petersi* in my key to the genus (Bull. Raffles Mus. No. 3, 1930, p. 42), is after *N. trianguligera*.

The following is a description of the species:—

Maxillary teeth 30—32, the posterior ones gradually enlarged. Eye moderate; rostral just visible from above; internasals truncate anteriorly, nearly or quite as long as the prefrontals; frontal once and a third times as long as broad, as long as its distance from the rostral or the end of the snout, shorter than the parietals; loreal higher than long; one pre- and three or four postoculars; temporals 2+2 or 3; nine supralabials the fourth, fifth and sixth touching the eye; five infralabials in contact with the anterior pair of sublinguals, which are shorter than the posterior pair. Scales in 19 rows, all more or less strongly keeled; ventrals 140—150; anal divided; subcaudals 65—78.

Brown above, with small black dots regularly arranged dorsally; a larger series of lateral black spots between which the scales are red in life, head dark olive, vermiculated with black, labials yellowish, with black sutures; yellow below, the shields edged with black or with the black confined to the outer margins.

Head and body 380; tail 120 mm.

Range. Sumatra; Borneo; the Malay Peninsula.

^aCommunicated by Dr. Malcolm A. Smith. The specimen is in the British Museum.

Natrix maculata (Edel.).

A specimen of *Natrix maculata* collected in the Kuantan district of Pahang by Mr. G. B. Purvis, Govt. Veterinary Surgeon, Raub, has only 138 ventral shields and 93 sub-caudals; the previous minimum counts were 140 and 95 respectively.

Calamaria gimletti Blgr.

Calamaria gimletti, Boulenger, Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., (7), XV, 1905, p. 456 and Fauna Malay Pen., 1912, p. 220; Sworder, Journ. Malayan Br. Roy. Asiat. Soc. VII, 1929, p. 337; Smith, Bull. Raffles Mus., 3, 1930, p. 59 (and Smedley, footnote).

Calamaria javanica, (nec Boulenger, Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., 161, VII, 1861, p. 279) Wall, Rec. Ind. Mus., XXII, 1921, p. 729 (Johore).

Mr. G. H. Sworder recently pointed out to me in correspondence that the specimen of *Calamaria gimletti* which he recorded from Fraser's Hill falls under *C. javanica* Blgr.; by the description of that snake given by Dr. Malcolm Smith in his recent work on Peninsular Reptiles. I thereupon looked into the question and conclude as follows:—

Boulenger, in his original description of *Calamaria javanica*, says "mental in contact with anterior chin shields". This is confirmed in the Catalogue of Snakes and by de Rooij, who examined the type¹.

Wall's specimen from Johore has the first infralabials in contact, thus separating the mental from the chin-shields.

According to the original descriptions, the posterior chin-shields are separated in *javanica*, but in contact in the case of *gimletti*, and in the specimen which Wall recorded as *javanica*.

In spite of the low ventral counts of Wall's and Sworder's specimens, they cannot therefore be *C. javanica*, which should be deleted from the Peninsular list.

Dr. Smith has since examined both these specimens and agrees that Sworder's specimen should be regarded as *gimletti*. Wall's specimen, which was in bad condition, he says "is certainly not *javanica* and appears to be *pavimentata*." *C. pavimentata* has also the first infralabials in contact with one another, and posterior chin-shields in contact. It differs from *gimletti* and *javanica* in the presence of a preocular, which, according to Wall, is lacking in his specimen.

¹ Reptiles of the Indo-Australian Arch. II, 1917, p. 176.

Dr. Smith has examined examples of this rare snake collected at Tampin, Negri Sembilan, by Mr. S. J. Ludgater. He gives (in litt.) the ventral and subcaudal counts as follows:—

	V.	Sc.		V.	Sc.
♂	207	17	♀	218	11
♂	200	16	♀	229	12
♂	203	17	♀	226	9

Enhyalis punctata (Gray).

Phytelaps punctata Gray, Cat. Sn. 1849, p. 68.

Hypsirhina punctata, Boulenger, Cat. Sn. III, 1896, p. 12; de Rooij, Indo-Australian Reptiles, II, 1917, p. 184.

The Raffles Museum possesses five immature specimens from Kemaman, Trengganu, East Coast of the Malay Peninsula, taken in 1893 by Dr. Johnston. All five examples have only 23 scale-rows, but agree in other respects with the description. They were identified in 1898 by Dr. G. A. Boulenger who, however, failed to include them in his Fauna of the Malay Peninsula. The species is mentioned by de Rooij as occurring in the Malay Peninsula, but no reference is given to the source of her information. Smith does not refer to the species, but there seems to be little doubt that it must be added to the Peninsular list; it occurs also in Sumatra, Banka and Borneo.

Hipistes hydrinus (Cant.).

A specimen of unknown origin in the Raffles Museum spirit collection has a total length of 590 mm., and must have measured considerably more when fresh. It has six lower labials in contact with the anterior sub-linguals on the left side, five on the right.

Amblycephalus carinatus Boie.

Amblycephalus carinatus Boie, Isis, 1828, p. 1035; Boulenger, Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., III, 1896, p. 445; M. A. Smith, Journ. N. H. S. Siam, II, 1916, p. 165; de Rooij, Rept. Indo-Austr. Arch. II, 1917, p. 277.

Paras herdmorei, (part), Theobald, Cat. Rept. Asiat. Soc. Mus., 1868, p. 63.

Amblycephalus carinatus hananui, M. A. Smith, Journ. N. H. S. Siam, VI, 1923, p. 204.

Amblycephalus carinatus herdmorei, M. A. Smith, Bull. Raffles Mus., 3, 1930, p. 88.

The first authentic record of this snake in the Malay Peninsula is that of Hanitsch (List of the Birds, Reptiles and Amphibians in the Raffles Museum, Singapore, corrected up to Dec. 1912); the next that of Smith (1930). Smith's division into sub-species

(1923) is based on the assumption that de Rooij's figures give the range of variation for specimens from the Archipelago only; this is not the case. In any event there is no line of demarcation between the two supposed forms.

The Raffles Museum possesses a specimen from the Dindings, Malay Peninsula, taken in 1902 by Mr. R. J. Wilkinson: total length, 522 mm., tail 110 mm.; ventrals, 181; sub-caudals, 77. There are also two smaller specimens from Java.

Aipysurus eydouxi (Gray).

A specimen in the Raffles Museum has a total length of 670 mm. It is thus much bigger than the usual limit of size (550 mm. according to Smith, Monograph of the Sea-Snakes, 1926), but not so big as the female from Semarang, Java, recorded by the same author as having a total length of 910 mm.

This example, which appears to be a female, was taken near Singapore in 1906.
